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Third International Workshop on Empirical Research in Business Process Management (ER-BPM 2012)

Organizers: Bela Mutschler, Jan Recker, Roel Wieringa

Introduction

Empirical research in business process management(BPM) is coming of age. In 2009, when the inaugural ER-BPM workshop was held, the field of BPM research was characterized by a strong emphasis on solution development, but also by an increasing demand for insights or evaluations of BPM technology based on dedicated empirical research strategies. The ER-BPM workshop series was created to provide an international forum for researchers to discuss and present such research.

In 2012, empirical research in BPM is now firmly established as an important strand of research around the use of BPM. Several of the key journals in the information systems discipline have run and published special issues or special sections on BPM research, either with a dedicated emphasis on empirical issues and empirical findings .[3] or with a focus on research that mixes both design and empirical work ..[1, 5]. Further special issues are in the pipeline .[4].

Aside from empirical BPM research finding a dedicated space in the academic journals, an increasing number of empirical research papers are also being published as identified by Houy et al. .[2] and Shown in Fig. 1.

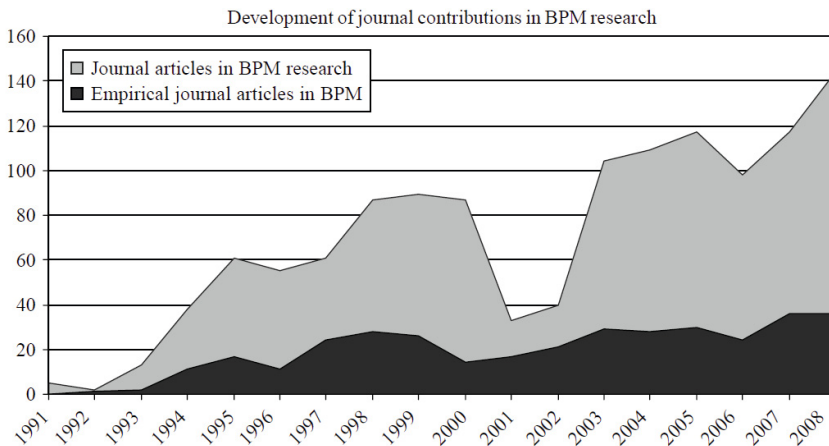


Fig. 1: Published BPM research articles over time .[2].

The benefits of empirical research include improved understanding of the problems that can be solved by BPM and improved insight into the performance of techniques in practice. While these benefits are now increasingly being demonstrated in the field of BPM, the field is still growing and maturing. The

ER-BPM workshop thus continues to be an important forum in which to discuss ongoing work, challenges, and outcomes.

The ER-BPM 2012 Workshop

Our ER-BPM 2012 workshop continued to address the demand for empirical research in BPM, and set out to stimulate empirical research that can contribute to a better understanding of the problems, challenges, and existing solutions in the BPM field.

In particular, we envisage the workshop to provide an *interdisciplinary* forum for researchers as well as interested practitioners to improve the understanding of BPM-specific requirements, methods and theories, tools and techniques. Accordingly, we defined the following (not exhaustive) list of topics as relevant to the current state of empirical research in BPM:

- Empirical research on BPM methods, BPM technologies, BPM tools
- Empirical research on process-aware information systems
- BPM-related (software) experiments
- BPM-related action research
- BPM-related surveys
- BPM-related case studies
- BPM-related modeling and simulation studies
- BPM-related experience reports
- Critical success factor analyses of BPM methods, technologies, tools
- Evaluations and comparisons of BPM tools, platforms, and standards
- Frameworks for quantitatively analyzing BPM methods, technologies, tools
- Frameworks for qualitatively evaluating BPM methods, technologies, tools
- Requirements on empirical and experimental BPM research
- Usability and ease-of-use of BPM technologies and BPM tools
- User acceptance of BPM projects
- BPM success, failure, and contingency models
- Studies on the role of standards in practical BPM projects
- Comparative studies of BPM technology
- Empirical studies of cross-organizational BPM coordination and settings
- Costs, benefits, and risks of applying BPM methods, technologies, and tools
- Evaluation approaches for BPM methods, BPM technologies, and BPM tools
- Practice-driven challenges for future BPM research
- Reflections on the use of empirical methods in the BPM field
- Advances in empirical methods for BPM research

We invited papers that outline research in progress as well as completed research papers. Submitted papers were reviewed by at least three members of the Program Committee, and were evaluated on the basis of significance, originality, technical quality, and exposition.

The Workshop Papers

In 2012, we accepted three papers for presentation in a dedicated ER-BPM session. These articles provide a snapshot of current examples of how empirical research in BPM can be conducted, and what insights such research can uncover.

The paper “Exploring Workaround Situations in Business Processes” by Nesi Outmazgin reports on a multiple case study on types and reasons of workarounds in business process. This is a relevant topic that has not yet been extensively researched, which in turn makes it a perfect fit to the workshop.

The paper “Investigating the Process of Process Modeling with Eye Movement Analysis” by Jakob Pinggera, Marco Furtner, Markus Martini, Pierre Sachse, Katharina Reiter, Stefan Zugal, and Barbara Weber examines a new data collection and analysis technique – eye movement analysis – and its application to a study of the process of process modeling. The paper was selected because it addresses an important topic with a refreshingly new approach to research.

The third paper, “Business Process Orientation: An Empirical Study of Its Impact on Employees’ Innovativeness,” by Jing Tang, L.G. Pee, and Junichi Iijima, explores the role of process orientation as an organizational mindset in an effort toward organizational innovation. Interestingly, this paper considers data from a survey of Japanese organizations, thereby adding insights into cultural and national BPM practices that have been under-represented.

We hope you find these papers stimulating and interesting. We would like to thank the authors for their efforts, and also the Program Committee for dedicating their time to evaluating and selecting these papers.

September 2012

Bela Mutschler
Jan Recker
Roel Wieringa

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